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An Evening with the Evening

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AN EVENING WITH THE EVENING

The night is very tall
coming down the street. The light
of the streetlights coming on
in sequence just in front of the dark,
this light is a prison
broken loose from itself.
The city has an expression
on its face like that of someone hoping

he will not be noticed,
it is like that of the man now watching
the processional flaring of the lamps from the corner,
beneath the bank sign.
He notices the city, he notices
the reflection of his own face in the city,
he wonders what the city must have done

to the night,
that it should avert itself like a debtor
while welcoming the night
with such display, such grim pomp, so courteous
a removal, before
the arrival of darkness,
of any competing darknesses that may have
managed to precede it there.

Suddenly it is the total blackness
with the numerous small lights of the face
of the city shining through it;
then it is the end,
which is only himself, going
home to his wife and children,
turning and trying to walk away from the darkness
that precedes him, darkness of which he is the center.